

PRESS RELEASE

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INSURANCE COMMISSION EXTENDS HOURS TO HELP CONSUMERS “GET SMART” ABOUT THEIR INSURANCE COVERAGE

CHARLESTON, WV – West Virginia Insurance Commissioner, Jane L. Cline, announced today that the Insurance Commission will be extending its hours Thursday, January 27, 2005 as part of the fourth-annual Get Smart About Insurance Week.

Although most Americans feel they have about the right amount of insurance coverage (72%), only 33 percent say they understand the details of the coverage “very well,” according to a recent survey by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). Also, The General Accounting Office reported 144 fake health insurers sold bogus policies that affected more than 200,000 policyholders between 2000 and 2002, resulting in \$252 million in unpaid claims.

“When it comes to insurance, knowledge is your best policy,” Cline said. “That’s why we are encouraging consumers to get smart about their insurance coverage, and we believe the West Virginia Insurance Commission is the best resource for insurance-related questions and concerns. Our Consumer Service staff will be on hand from 5 o’clock to 8 o’clock Thursday evening to take calls and answer insurance questions.”

During this special week, West Virginia residents are urged to contact the West Virginia Insurance Commission at 1-888-TRY-WVIC to request a free brochure and get information on what they should expect from insurance coverage, as well as getting tips for confirming whether a policy is legitimate.

“The West Virginia Insurance Commission is a terrific source of unbiased information,” Cline adds. “You may not have the coverage you need. You may have more than you need. You may feel you’ve been treated unfairly when shopping for insurance, or you may just want help understanding how different kinds of insurance work. No matter what your situation is, we are here to help you get smart about insurance.”

Get Smart About Insurance Week is all about education.